



6849 Peachtree Dunwoody Road  
Building B-3, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30328  
phone: 770-569-2105, fax: 770-410-1608

223325  
2010-64C

April 1, 2010

**VIA U.S. MAIL**

Ms. Jocelyn Boyd, Interim Chief Clerk  
Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
101 Executive Center Dr., Suite 100  
Columbia, SC 29210

Re: *Approval of the Traffic Exchange Agreement Negotiated by and between Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and Verizon Wireless Pursuant to Section 251(b)(5) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*

Dear Ms. Boyd:

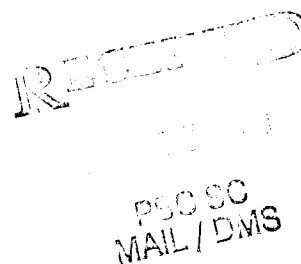
Enclosed for filing are an original and two (2) copies of the Petition for Approval and the Traffic Exchange Agreement negotiated by and between Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("Sandhill") and Verizon Wireless ("VZW"). Both Parties respectfully request that the Agreement filed be reviewed and considered for approval at the Commission's earliest convenience.

John Staurulakis, Inc. is filing the enclosed petition and Agreement on behalf of Sandhill and would appreciate that you file the same and return the extra copy stamped "filed" in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Ozanick, Staff Consultant – Regulatory & Policy  
John Staurulakis, Inc.



cc: Marc Sterling, Verizon Wireless

HEADQUARTERS:

7852 Walker Drive, Suite 200, Greenbelt, MD 20770  
phone: 301-459-7590, fax: 301-577-5575  
internet: www.jsitel.com, e-mail: jsi@jsitel.com

Echelon Building II, Suite 200  
9430 Research Boulevard, Austin, TX 78759  
phone: 512-338-0473, fax: 512-346-0822

Eagandale Corporate Center, Suite 310  
1380 Corporate Center Curve, Eagan, MN 55121  
phone: 651-452-2660, fax: 651-452-1909

547 South Oakview Lane  
Bountiful, UT 84010  
phone: 801-294-4576, fax: 801-294-5124

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

In Re:       *Approval of the Traffic Exchange Agreement Negotiated by and between Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and Verizon Wireless, Pursuant to Sections 251(a) and 251(b)(5) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996*

**PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF THE TRAFFIC EXCHANGE AGREEMENT  
NEGOTIATED BY AND BETWEEN SANDHILL TELEPHONE  
COOPERATIVE, INC. AND VERIZON WIRELESS, PURSUANT TO  
SECTIONS 251(A) AND 251(B)(5) OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF  
1996**

Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("Sandhill") respectfully files this request with the Public Service Commission of South Carolina for approval of the attached Traffic Exchange Agreement (the "Agreement"). The Agreement was negotiated by and between Sandhill and Verizon Wireless ("VZW") pursuant to Sections 251 (a) & (b)(5) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("the Act"). The Agreement provides for the continued interconnection and mutual exchange of traffic between the two companies' networks, thereby facilitating VZW's provision of Commercial Mobile Radio Services ("CMRS") to customers in the State of South Carolina. Sandhill, therefore, respectfully requests that the Commission act within the ninety (90) days specified by the Act and approve the Agreement.

In support of its request, Sandhill states the following:

**THE PARTIES**

1.       Sandhill is an incumbent local exchange carrier authorized to provide local exchange service in the State of South Carolina.

2. VZW is a telecommunications carrier that has been granted authority by the Federal Communications Commission to provide CMRS services in specific markets in the State of South Carolina.

### **THE AGREEMENT**

3. Sandhill and VZW have successfully negotiated the Agreement for the continued interconnection and mutual exchange of traffic between the two companies' networks. A copy of the Agreement is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

4. Sandhill and VZW have entered into this Agreement, pursuant to Sections 251(a) and 251(b)(5) of the Act.

5. Pursuant to Section 252(e) of the Act, Sandhill is submitting the Agreement to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina for its consideration and approval.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACT**

6. First, as required by Section 252(e)(2)(a)(i) of the Act, the Agreement does not discriminate against any other telecommunications carrier.

7. Second, the Agreement is consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity, as required by Section 252(e)(2)(a)(ii) of the Act.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGREEMENT**

8. In accordance with Section 252(e) of the Act, the Public Service Commission of South Carolina is charged with approving or rejecting the Agreement between Sandhill and VZW within ninety (90) days of its submission. The Act provides that the Public Service

Commission of South Carolina may reject such Agreement only if it finds that the Agreement or any portion thereof discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the Agreement, or if it finds that the implementation of the Agreement or any portion thereof is not consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity.

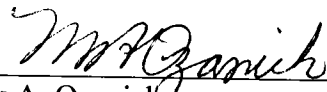
9. Sandhill and VZW aver that the Agreement is consistent with the standards for approval.

10. Pursuant to Section 252(i) of the Act, once the Agreement is approved, Sandhill will make the entire Agreement available to any similarly situated CMRS provider.

11. Sandhill respectfully requests that the Public Service Commission of South Carolina approve the Agreement negotiated between the parties without revision as expeditiously as possible consistent with the public interest.

This 1<sup>st</sup> day of April 2010.


Respectfully submitted,

By:   
Mark A. Ozanick  
John Staurulakis, Inc.  
On Behalf Of:  
Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Mark A. Ozanick, hereby certify that I have served a copy of the foregoing Petition for Approval of the Traffic Exchange Agreement on the following *via* United States Mail:

Marc Sterling, Contract Negotiator  
Verizon Wireless  
1120 Sanctuary Pkwy., Suite 150  
Mail Code: GASA5ICT  
Alpharetta, GA 30009



---

Mark A. Ozanick

**TRAFFIC EXCHANGE AGREEMENT**  
**BY AND BETWEEN**  
**SANDHILL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE, INC.**  
**AND**  
**VERIZON WIRELESS**

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## **I. ARTICLE I**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This traffic exchange and compensation agreement ("Agreement") is effective as of the 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2009 (the "Effective Date"), by and between Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc. ("Sandhill") with offices at 122 S. Main St., P.O. Box 519, Jefferson, SC 29718 and the Verizon Wireless entities listed on the signature page of this Agreement, individually and collectively doing business as Verizon Wireless (collectively "VZW") with an office and principal place of business at One Verizon Way, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920.

### **2. RECITALS**

WHEREAS, Sandhill is an incumbent Local Exchange Carrier ("ILEC") in the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, VZW is a Commercial Mobile Radio Service provider of two-way mobile communications services operating within the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, The Parties acknowledge that Sandhill is entitled to maintain that it is a rural telephone company (as defined in 47 U.S.C. 153) as provided by 47 U.S.C. 251(f). By entering into this Agreement, Sandhill is not waiving its right to maintain that it is a rural telephone company and its right to maintain that it is exempt from §251(c) under 47 U.S.C. 251 (f) of the Act; and

WHEREAS, Sandhill and VZW exchange calls between their networks and wish to establish traffic exchange and compensation arrangements for exchanging traffic as specified below.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual provisions contained herein and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, Sandhill and VZW hereby agree as follows:

## **II. ARTICLE II**

### **1. DEFINITIONS**

Special meanings are given to common words in the telecommunications industry, and coined words and acronyms are common in the custom and usage in the industry. Words used in this contract are to be understood according to the custom and usage of the telecommunications industry, as an exception to the general rule of contract interpretation that words are to be understood in their ordinary and popular sense. In addition to this rule of interpretation, the following terms used in this Agreement shall have the meanings as specified below:



- 1.1 “Act” means the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.
- 1.2 “As Defined in the Act” means as specifically defined by the Act, as may be interpreted from time to time by the FCC, the Commission, South Carolina state courts, or federal courts.
- 1.3 “As Described in the Act” means as described in or required by the Act, as may be interpreted from time to time by the FCC, the Commission, South Carolina state courts, or federal courts.
- 1.4 “Affiliate” means a person that (directly or indirectly) owns or controls, is owned or controlled by, or is under common ownership or control with, another person. For purposes of this paragraph, the term “own” means to own an equity interest (or the equivalent thereof) of more than ten percent (10%).
- 1.5 “Central Office Switch” means a switch used to provide Telecommunications Services, including, but not limited to:
  - (a) “End Office Switch” is a switch in which the subscriber station loops are terminated for connection to either lines or trunks. The subscriber receives terminating, switching, signaling, transmission, and related functions for a defined geographic area by means of an End Office Switch.
  - (b) “Remote End Office Switch” is a switch in which the subscriber station loops are terminated. The control equipment providing terminating, switching, signaling, transmission, and related functions would reside in a host office. Local switching capabilities may be resident in a Remote End Office Switch.
  - (c) “Host Office Switch” is a switch with centralized control over the functions of one or more Remote End Office Switches. A Host Office Switch can serve as an end office as well as providing services to other remote end offices requiring terminating, signaling, transmission, and related functions including local switching.
  - (d) “Tandem Office Switch” is a switching system that establishes trunk-to-trunk connections. Local tandems switch calls from one end office to another within the same geographic area, and access tandems switch traffic from host or end offices to and from an Interexchange Carrier. A Tandem Office Switch can provide host office or end office switching functions as well as the tandem functions.

- 1.6 “Commercial Mobile Radio Services” or “CMRS” means a radio communication service between mobile stations or receivers and land stations, or by mobile stations communicating among themselves that is provided for profit and that makes interconnected service available to the public or to such classes of eligible users as to be effectively available to a substantial portion of the public. 47 CFR§20.
- 1.7 “Commission” means the South Carolina Public Service Commission.
- 1.8 “Extended Area Service” or “EAS” is as defined and specified in Sandhill’s then current General Customer Services Tariff.
- 1.9 “Effective Date” means the date first above written.
- 1.10 “FCC” means the Federal Communications Commission.
- 1.11 “Interconnection” for purposes of this Agreement is the linking of Sandhill and VZW networks for the exchange of telecommunications traffic described in this Agreement.
- 1.12 “Interexchange Carrier” or “IXC” means a carrier, other than a CMRS carrier, that provides or carries, directly or indirectly, InterLATA Service or IntraLATA Toll Traffic.
- 1.13 “InterLATA Service” means telecommunications between a point located in a Local Access and Transport Area and a point located outside such area.
- 1.14 “IntraLATA Toll Traffic,” means those station calls that originate and terminate within the same Local Access and Transport Area and that are carried outside Sandhill’s Local Service Area.
- 1.15 “InterMTA Traffic” is Telecommunications traffic, which, at the beginning of the call, originates in one MTA and terminates in another MTA.
- 1.16 “Local Access and Transport Area” or “LATA” means a contiguous geographic area:
  - (a) Established before February 8, 1996, by a Bell operating company such that no exchange area includes points within more than 1 metropolitan statistical area, consolidated metropolitan statistical area, or State, except as expressly permitted under the AT&T Consent Decree; or

- (b) Established or modified by a Bell operating company after February 8, 1996, and approved by the Commission.
- 1.17 “Local Service Area” means, for VZW, Major Trading Area Number 6 (Charlotte-Greensboro-Greenville-Raleigh) and for Sandhill, its local calling area contained in Sandhill’s then current General Customer Services Tariff.
- 1.18 “Local Telecommunications Traffic” is defined for all purposes under this Agreement as Telecommunications traffic that is originated on one Party’s network, and terminated on the other Party’s network within the same Major Trading Area (MTA). Local Telecommunications Traffic may be handled pursuant to an approved interconnection agreement between the originating Party and a carrier, which performs only a contractual transiting function for the originating Party in lieu of a direct connection between the Parties, provided that the service provided by VZW is a two-way mobile service. For purposes of determining originating and terminating points, the originating or terminating point for Sandhill shall be the end office serving the calling or called party, and for VZW shall be the originating or terminating cell site location which services the calling or called party at the beginning of the call.
- 1.19 “Local Exchange Carrier” or “LEC” means any person that is engaged in the provision of telephone exchange service or exchange access. Such term does not include a person insofar as such person is engaged in the provision of a commercial mobile service under §332(c) of the Act, except to the extent that the Federal Communications Commission finds that such service should be included in the definition of such term. 47 U.S.C. §153(26).
- 1.20 “Major Trading Area” or “MTA” means the Major Trading Area designated by the FCC which is the service area based on the Rand McNally 1992 Commercial Atlas & Marketing Guide, 123<sup>rd</sup> edition, at pages 38-39, as further specified or modified by 47 C.F.R. §24.202(a) or other applicable law.
- 1.21 “Mobile Station” means a radio-communication station capable of being moved and which ordinarily does move. 47 U.S.C. §153(28).
- 1.22 “NPA” or the “Number Plan Area” also referred to as an “area code” refers to the three-digit code which precedes the NXX in a dialing sequence and identifies the general calling area within the North American Numbering Plan scope to which a call is routed (*i.e.*, NPA-NXX-XXXX).
- 1.23 “NXX” means the three-digit code, which appears as the first three digits of a seven-digit telephone number within a valid NPA or area code.

- 1.24 “Party” means either Sandhill or VZW, and “Parties” means Sandhill and VZW.
- 1.25 “Point of Interconnection” or “POI” means the mutually agreed upon point between the Parties’ respective networks where an originating Party’s traffic is deemed to be handed off to the terminating Party’s network.
- 1.26 “Rate Center” means the specific geographic point and corresponding geographic area that is associated with one or more NPA-NXX codes that have been assigned to an incumbent LEC for its provision of exchange services.
- 1.27 “Reciprocal Compensation” means an arrangement between two carriers in which each receives the same compensation rate from the other carrier for the transport and termination on each carrier’s network of Local Telecommunications Traffic, as defined in §1.18 above, that originates on the network facilities of the other carrier. Compensation, regardless of the Party that receives it, is symmetrical.
- 1.28 “Telecommunications” means the transmission, between or among points specified by the user, of information of the user’s choosing, without change in the form or content of the information as sent and received. 47 U.S.C. §153(43).
- 1.29 “Telecommunications Act” means the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.
- 1.30 “Telecommunications Carrier” means any provider of telecommunications services, except that such term does not include aggregators of telecommunications services (as defined in 47 U.S.C. §226(a)(2)). A Telecommunications Carrier shall be treated as a common carrier under this chapter only to the extent that it is engaged in providing Telecommunications Services, except that the Federal Communications Commission shall determine whether the provision of fixed and mobile satellite service shall be treated as common carriage. 47 U.S.C. §153(44).
- 1.31 “Telecommunications Services” means the offering of Telecommunications for a fee directly to the public, or to such classes of users as to be effectively available directly to the public, regardless of the facilities used.
- 1.32 “Termination” means the switching of Local Telecommunications Traffic at the terminating carrier’s end office switch, or equivalent facility, and delivery of such traffic to the called Party’s premises or mobile handset.

- 1.33 “Transiting Traffic” is traffic that originates from one provider’s network, “transits” one or more other provider’s network substantially unchanged, and terminates to yet another provider’s network.
- 1.34 “Transport” means the transmission and any necessary tandem switching of Local Telecommunications Traffic subject to §51(b)(5) of the Act from the Point of Interconnection between the two carriers to the terminating carrier’s End Office Switch that directly serves the called party, or equivalent facility provided by a carrier other than an incumbent LEC pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations §51.701(c).
- 1.35 “Type 1 Service” often referred to as a line-side trunk connection, is a service that involves interconnection to a telephone company end office. A Type 1 Service is offered in connection with the provision of telephone numbers hosted by a Sandhill switch. If available and economically feasible, SS7 functionality will be used.
- 1.36 “Type 2 Service” often referred to as a trunk side connection, is a service that involves interconnection to a telephone company end office (Type 2-B) or tandem (Type 2-A).

## **2.0 INTERPRETATION AND CONSTRUCTION**

All references to Sections, Exhibits and Schedules shall be deemed to be references to Sections of, and Exhibits and Schedules to, this Agreement unless the context shall otherwise require. The headings of the Sections and the terms are inserted for convenience of reference only and are not intended to be a part of or to affect the meaning of this Agreement. Unless the context shall otherwise require, any reference to any agreement, other instrument or other third-party offering, guide or practice, statute, regulation, rule or tariff is for convenience of reference only and is not intended to be a part of or to affect the meaning of a rule or tariff as amended and supplemented from time-to-time (and, in the case of a statute, regulation, rule or tariff, to any successor provision).

## **3.0 SCOPE**

- 3.1 This Agreement is intended, *inter alia*, to describe and enable specific traffic exchange and Reciprocal Compensation arrangements between the Parties. This Agreement does not obligate either Party to provide arrangements not specifically provided for herein.
- 3.2 This Agreement sets forth the terms, conditions, and rates under which the Parties agree to interconnect the CMRS network of VZW and the ILEC network of Sandhill for purposes of exchanging Local Telecommunications Traffic, provided that the service provided by VZW to its customer is a two-way mobile service as defined in 47 U.S.C.

§153(27). This Agreement does not cover VZW one-way paging service traffic or fixed wireless. VZW does not currently provide fixed wireless services in Sandhill's Local Service Area. VZW agrees that it will provide Sandhill prior notice of its intent to launch fixed wireless services in Sandhill's Local Service Area. Upon Sandhill's receipt of such notice, the Parties agree to negotiate an appropriate agreement or an Amendment to this Agreement, which will address the exchange of such traffic.

- 3.3 This Agreement relates to the exchange of traffic between Sandhill and VZW. VZW represents that it is a CMRS provider of telecommunications services to subscribers in MTA No. 6 (Charlotte-Greensboro-Greenville-Raleigh). Additions or changes to VZW's NPA-NXXs will be as listed in Telcordia's Local Exchange Routing Guide ("LERG") under Operating Company Numbers ("OCNs") 6350 and 6398. With respect to wireless-to-landline traffic, VZW shall not deliver traffic to Sandhill that originated on a Non-Party Carrier's network.
- 3.4 With respect to landline-to-wireless traffic, this Agreement is limited to Sandhill end user customers' traffic for which Sandhill has tariff authority to carry. Sandhill's NPA-NXX(s) are listed in the LERG under OCN 0546.
- 3.5 Any amendment, modification, or supplement to this Agreement must be in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each Party.

#### **4.0 SERVICE AGREEMENT**

##### **Description of Arrangements:**

This Agreement provides for the following interconnection arrangements between the networks of Sandhill and VZW. Additional arrangements that may be mutually agreed to by the Parties in the future will be delineated in Attachment A to this Agreement. An NPA-NXX assigned to VZW, as well as numbers ported-in by VZW customers, shall be treated as Local Service Area traffic and included in any local or EAS calling scope, or similar program, to the same extent as any Sandhill or other incumbent LEC's NPA-NXX in the same rate center provided that VZW assigns numbers from such NPA-NXX to, or ports-in numbers from, customers within the Local Service Area of Sandhill and VZW has network facilities to serve such customers.

##### **4.1 Indirect Interconnection:**

To the extent that one Party has entered into or may enter into contractual arrangements with a third-party for the delivery of one Party's originated traffic to the other Party's network (*i.e.* traffic exchanged indirectly between the Parties) for termination to the terminating Party's customers,

the terminating Party will accept this traffic subject to compensation arrangement as outlined in §5 below. VZW may choose to route to Sandhill indirectly those Local Service Area calls that originate on its network within MTA No. 6 on switches other than its Charleston, SC switch.

Notwithstanding §4.0 above, VZW acknowledges that, as a result of Bethune, SC to Camden, SC being an interLATA EAS calling scope, landline-to-wireless calls from Sandhill's Bethune, SC rate center to VZW customers who have been assigned mobile numbers associated with the Camden, SC rate center will not be treated as Local Service Area calls unless or until VZW chooses to establish direct interconnection to Sandhill, as prescribed in §4.2 below.

As a compromise, and in exchange for certain other considerations provided for in this Agreement, the Parties agree that to the extent Local Telecommunications Traffic is exchanged indirectly *via* a third party LEC ("Third Party Tandem Provider"), the originating Party is responsible for any transit fees imposed by the Third Party Tandem Provider. The Parties agree that this compromise will in no way prejudice any position either Party may take regarding financial responsibility for charges by Third Party Tandem Providers with respect to future agreements or regulatory or legislative proceedings.

This arrangement for indirect interconnection will be subject to renegotiation if by change of law or for any other reason the Third Party Tandem Provider no longer offers the transiting service.

- 4.2 Direct Interconnection at Chesterfield: At VZW's option, a two-way trunk group will be established between Sandhill's Chesterfield Host End Office Switch (CHFDSCXADS0) and VZW's Charleston, SC switch (NCHRSCPLCM1), with the POI designated at a technically feasible meet point on Sandhill's network. VZW will accept one hundred percent (100%) of the responsibility to deliver its originated traffic to and receive Sandhill-originated traffic from the meet point POI. In return, Sandhill agrees to be responsible for one hundred percent (100%) of the transport facility costs to deliver its originated traffic to and receive VZW-originated traffic from the meet point POI.

4.1.1 Landline-to-Wireless:

Local Service Area calls originated on Sandhill's network for termination on VZW's network shall be routed from Sandhill to VZW *via* the two-way direct trunk group.

4.1.2 Wireless-to-Landline:

Local Service Area calls originated on VZW's network within MTA No. 6 (Charlotte-Greensboro-Greenville-Raleigh) for termination to users of Sandhill's network that can be reached *via* the connection to the Chesterfield Host End Office Switch shall be routed from VZW's network *via* the two-way direct trunk group to Sandhill's Chesterfield Host End Office Switch for termination by Sandhill to its customers, as appropriate.

- 4.1.3 Both Parties will use best efforts to route Local Service Area calls to the other Party over the direct interconnection facilities except in the case of an emergency, temporary equipment failure, or blocking of existing direct interconnection facilities. Should either Party determine that the other Party is routing its originated traffic indirectly, the originating Party agrees to update its routing and translations tables to move such traffic to the direct interconnection facilities within five (5) business days.

**5.0 COMPENSATION**

5.1 Traffic Subject to Reciprocal Compensation:

Reciprocal Compensation is applicable for Transport and Termination of Local Telecommunications Traffic as defined in §1.18 and is related to the exchange of traffic described in §4 and Attachment A, as applicable. For the purposes of billing compensation for Local Telecommunications Traffic, billed minutes will be based upon actual usage recorded and/or records/reports provided by the transiting carrier. Measured usage begins when the terminating recording switch receives answer supervision from the called end-user and ends when the terminating recording switch receives or sends disconnect (release message) supervision, whichever occurs first. The measured usage is aggregated at the end of the measurement cycle and rounded to a whole minute. Billing for Local Telecommunications Traffic shall be based on the aggregated measured usage less traffic recorded as local that is deemed InterMTA Traffic based on the default factor provided in §5.2.

The rate for Reciprocal Compensation for Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged directly shall be \$0.012 per minute.

The rate for Reciprocal Compensation for Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged indirectly shall be \$0.015 per minute.



The Parties agree to bill each other for Local Telecommunications Traffic as described in this Agreement unless the Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged between the Parties is balanced and falls within an agreed upon threshold ("Traffic Balance Threshold"). The Parties agree that for purposes of this Agreement, the Traffic Balance Threshold is reached when the Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged, both directly and indirectly, falls between 55% / 45% in either the wireless-to-landline or landline-to-wireless direction and the total volume of Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged is less than two million minutes per month. When the actual usage data for three (3) consecutive months indicates that the Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged, both directly and indirectly, falls within the Traffic Balance Threshold, then either Party may provide the other Party a written request, along with verifiable information supporting such request, to eliminate billing for Reciprocal Compensation per minute. Upon written consent by the Party receiving the request, which shall not be withheld unreasonably, there will be no billing for Reciprocal Compensation on a going forward basis unless otherwise agreed to by both Parties, in writing. The Parties' agreement to eliminate billing for Reciprocal Compensation carries with it the precondition regarding the Traffic Balance Threshold discussed above. As such, the two points have been negotiated as one interrelated term containing specific rates and conditions, which are non-separable for purposes of §16, hereof.

5.2 InterMTA Traffic:

The Parties agree that traffic that is directly or indirectly delivered, may be rated and recorded as Local Telecommunications Traffic subject to Reciprocal Compensation, but may have originated and terminated in different MTAs and therefore, is InterMTA Traffic. Recognizing that neither Party currently has a way of accurately measuring this InterMTA Traffic, the Parties agree, for the purposes of this Agreement, to a factor of zero percent (0%) as an estimate of InterMTA Traffic. InterMTA Traffic is subject to switched access compensation.

5.3 Calculation of Payments and Billing:

- 5.3.1 VZW will compensate Sandhill for Local Telecommunications Traffic and InterMTA Traffic delivered to Sandhill for termination to its customers, as prescribed and at the rate provided in §§5.1 and 5.2. Sandhill will compensate VZW for Local Telecommunications Traffic originated by Sandhill customers on Sandhill's network and delivered to VZW, for termination to its customers, as prescribed in §4 and at the rate provided in §5.1.

5.3.2 VZW shall prepare a monthly billing statement to Sandhill, reflecting the calculation of Reciprocal Compensation due VZW. Sandhill shall prepare a monthly billing statement to VZW, which will separately reflect the calculation of Reciprocal Compensation due Sandhill. Billing shall be based on actual measured usage, when available, or on billing records provided by the Third Party Tandem Provider for Local Telecommunications Traffic delivered indirectly. To the extent that VZW does not have the capability to bill based on actual measured usage, VZW shall bill using a factor that is based on each Party's proportion of originating Local Telecommunications Traffic to total Local Telecommunications Traffic exchanged between the Parties. This estimated percentage is referred to as the Traffic Factor and is listed below. The Parties agree to review the Traffic Factor on a periodic basis and, if warranted by the actual usage, revise the Traffic Factor appropriately.

- a) Landline-to-Wireless 30%
- b) Wireless-to-Landline 70%

5.3.3 Sandhill will prepare its bill in accordance with its existing CABS / SECABS billing systems. VZW will prepare its bill in accordance with its existing process for billing Reciprocal Compensation. The Parties will make an effort to conform to current and future OBF (CABS BOS) standards, insofar as is reasonable. In addition, the Parties will abide by all signaling standards as described in §7.8.

5.3.4 Each party may request to inspect, during normal business hours, the records which are the basis for any monthly bill issued by the other Party and to request copies thereof provided that the requested records do not exceed twelve (12) months in age from the date the monthly bill containing said record information was issued.

5.3.5 All invoices under this Agreement shall be sent to:

| <b>Verizon Wireless</b>  | <b>Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc.</b>   |
|--|---|
| Crystal Trull<br>Verizon Wireless<br>8921 Research Drive<br>Charlotte, NC 28262<br>Tel: 704-510-6006 | Susan Melton<br>Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc.<br>122 S. Main St.<br>P.O. Box 519<br>Jefferson, SC 29718<br>Tel: 843-658-3434 |

## **6.0 NOTICE OF CHANGES**

If a Party contemplates a change in its network, which it believes will materially affect the inter-operability of its network with the other Party, the Party making the change shall provide at least ninety (90) days advance written notice of such change to the other Party, provided, however, that this provision shall not apply to changes necessitated by emergencies or other circumstances outside the control of the party modifying its network.

## **7.0 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES**

- 7.1 Each Party is individually responsible to provide facilities within its network which are necessary for routing, transporting and, consistent with §5, measuring and billing traffic from the other Party's network and for delivering such traffic to the other Party's network in an acceptable industry standard format, and to terminate the traffic it receives in that acceptable industry standard format to the proper address on its network. The Parties are each solely responsible for participation in and compliance with national network plans, including The National Network Security Plan and The Emergency Preparedness Plan. Neither Party shall use any service related to or use any of the Services provided in this Agreement in any manner that prevents other persons from using their service or destroys the normal quality of service to other carriers or to either Party's customers, and subject to notice and a reasonable opportunity of the offending Party to cure any violation, either Party may discontinue or refuse service if the other Party violates this provision.
- 7.2 Each Party is solely responsible for the services it provides to its customers and to other Telecommunications Carriers.
- 7.3 Each Party is responsible for managing NXX codes assigned to it.
- 7.4 Each Party is responsible for obtaining Local Exchange Routing Guide ("LERG") listings of the Common Language Location Identifier ("CLLI") assigned to its switches.
- 7.5 Each Party agrees to adhere to the blocking requirements for interconnection (P.01) as provided in Telcordia documentation GR145 - Core Compatibility for Interconnection of a Wireless Services Provider and a Local Exchange Company Network.
- 7.6 SS7 Out of Band Signaling (CCS/SS7) shall be the signaling of choice for interconnecting trunks where technically feasible for both Parties. Use of a third-party provider of SS7 trunks for connecting VZW to the Sandhill SS7 systems is permitted. Such connections will meet generally accepted industry technical standards. Each Party is responsible for its own SS7

signaling and therefore, neither Party will bill the other SS7 signaling charges including query and route set charges.

- 7.7 Each Party shall be responsible for its own independent connections to the 911/E911 network.
- 7.8 All originating traffic shall contain basic call information within the Initial Address Message (IAM) such as the calling number and will meet generally accepted industry technical standards. Altering of data parameters within the IAM shall not be permitted.
- 7.9 The Parties will offer service provider local number portability (LNP) in accordance with FCC rules and regulations. Service provider portability is the ability of users of Telecommunications Services to retain, existing telecommunications numbers without impairment of quality, reliability, or convenience when switching from one Telecommunications Carrier to another. Under this arrangement, the new Telecommunications Carrier must directly provide Telecommunications Service to the end user customer porting the telephone number. In order for a port request to be valid: 1) the end user customer must retain his or her original telephone number; 2) the requesting Telecommunications Carrier's coverage area must overlap the geographic location in which the end user customer's wireline telephone number is provisioned; and 3) the end user customer must be served with Telecommunications Service directly by the Telecommunications Carrier requesting the port.
- 7.10 The Parties agree to comply with finalized FCC rules and orders, North American Numbering Council (NANC) procedures and guidelines concerning numbering and other industry guidelines related to network architecture, including but not limited to, North American Numbering Council Local Number Portability Architecture and Administrative Plan report, which was adopted by the FCC, Second Report and Order, CC Docket 95-116, released August 18, 1997, and Central Office Code Assignment Guidelines.
- 7.11 LNP Handbooks. Except where such handbooks, documents, or web information (a) conflicts with contract language; (b) adds charges not covered in this Agreement; (c) establishes unreasonable restrictions or demands; (d) conflicts with industry best practices as endorsed by NANC; or (e) conflicts with applicable law, each Party will use the other's operational handbooks or web-based procedures for interacting with one another (*e.g.* placing orders, handling maintenance issues, obtaining customer information). If provisions in or changes to the operational handbooks or web-based procedures of one Party cause significant modifications to the other Party's ("Disputing Party") processes and are outside normal industry practice, the Disputing Party may raise the

concern with the Party whose procedures have changed. The Parties agree to discuss options for minimizing the impact of the change on the Disputing Party and implementing such options if appropriate. Adherence by a Party to a provision of the other Party's handbooks or procedures shall not constitute a waiver of the right to object to such provision, or to pursue the dispute resolution process regarding such provision.

- 7.12 Where direct interconnection has been established, each Party will perform local number portability ("LNP") database queries on its originated traffic prior to routing any of its originated traffic over the direct interconnection facilities, and will only route traffic over the direct interconnection facilities to the extent the local routing number ("LRN") returned from such queries belongs to the other Party.
- 7.13 When a ported telephone number becomes vacant, *e.g.*, the telephone number is no longer in service by the original end user customer; the ported telephone number will be released back to the carrier who is the code holder or block holder.

## **8.0 TERM AND TERMINATION**

- 8.1 Subject to the provisions of §14, the initial term of this Agreement shall be for a two-year term ("Term"), which shall commence on the Effective Date. This Agreement shall automatically renew for successive month-to-month periods, unless not less than sixty (60) days prior to the end of the Term or any renewal term, either Party notifies the other Party of its intent to terminate this Agreement or negotiate a successor agreement. In the case of a notice to terminate, the other Party may request negotiation of a successor agreement up to the end of the then-current term of this Agreement.

If either Party has requested the negotiation of a successor agreement as described above, then during the period of negotiation of the successor agreement, each Party shall continue to perform its obligations and provide the services described herein until such time as the successor agreement become effective. The rates, terms and conditions applying during the interim period between the end of the then-current term of this Agreement and when the successor agreement is executed shall be trued-up to be consistent with the rates, terms and conditions of the successor agreement reached through negotiation or arbitration.

If the Parties are unable to negotiate a successor agreement within the statutory time frame set for negotiations under the Act, then either Party has the right to submit this matter to the Commission for resolution pursuant to the statutory rules for arbitration under the Act. If the Parties are unable to negotiate a successor agreement by the end of the statutory

time frame, or any mutually agreed upon extension thereof, and neither Party submits this matter to the Commission for arbitration, then the Agreement shall terminate at the conclusion of the statutory time frame or at the end of the extension to the statutory time frame.

8.2 The Parties agree that disputed and undisputed amounts due under this Agreement shall be handled as follows:

8.2.1 If any portion of an amount due to a Party (the "Billing Party") under this Agreement is subject to a *bona fide* dispute between the Parties, the Party billed (the "Non-Paying Party") shall, within thirty (30) days of its receipt of the invoice containing such disputed amount, give written notice to the Billing Party of the amounts it disputes ("Disputed Amounts") and include in such notice the specific details and reasons for disputing each item. The Non-Paying Party shall pay when due all undisputed amounts to the Billing Party. The Parties will work together in good faith to resolve issues relating to the disputed amounts. If the dispute is resolved such that payment of the disputed amount is required, whether for the original full amount or for the settlement amount, the Non-Paying Party shall pay the full disputed or settlement amounts with interest at the lesser of (i) one and one-half percent (1½%) per month or (ii) the highest rate of interest that may be charged under South Carolina applicable law. In addition, the Billing Party may initiate a complaint proceeding with the appropriate regulatory or judicial entity, if unpaid undisputed amounts become more than ninety (90) days past due, provided the Billing Party gives an additional thirty (30) days notice and opportunity to cure the default.

8.2.2 Any undisputed amounts not paid when due shall accrue interest from the date such amounts were due at the lesser of (i) one and one-half percent (1½%) per month or (ii) the highest rate of interest that may be charged under South Carolina applicable law.

8.2.3 Undisputed amounts shall be paid within thirty (30) days of receipt of invoice from the Billing Party.

8.3 Upon termination or expiration of this Agreement in accordance with this Section:

- (a) Each Party shall comply immediately with its obligations as set forth above;
- (b) Each Party shall promptly pay all amounts (including any late payment charges) owed under this Agreement;

- (c) The provisions of §11.0 and §12.0 shall survive termination or expiration of this Agreement.

8.4 Either Party may terminate this Agreement in whole or in part in the event of a default of the other Party, provided, however, that the non-defaulting Party notifies the defaulting Party in writing of the alleged default and the defaulting Party does not implement mutually acceptable steps to remedy such alleged default within thirty (30) days after receipt of written notice thereof.

## **9.0 CANCELLATION CHARGES**

Except as provided herein, no cancellation charges shall apply.

## **10.0 SEVERABILITY**

10.1 The services, arrangements, terms and conditions of this Agreement were mutually negotiated by the Parties as a total arrangement and are intended to be non-severable. However, if any provision of this Agreement is held by a court or regulatory agency of competent jurisdiction to be unenforceable, the rest of the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect and shall not be affected unless removal of that provision results in a material change to this Agreement. If a material change as described in this paragraph occurs as a result of action by a court or regulatory agency, the Parties shall negotiate in good faith for replacement language. If replacement language cannot be agreed upon within a reasonable time period, either Party may invoke dispute resolution procedures as set forth in this Agreement.

## **11.0 INDEMNIFICATION**

11.1 Each Party (the "Indemnifying Party") shall indemnify and hold harmless the other Party ("Indemnified Party") from and against loss, cost, claim liability, damage, and expense (including reasonable attorney's fees) to customers and other third parties for:

- (1) damage to tangible personal property or for personal injury proximately caused by the negligence or willful misconduct of the Indemnifying Party, its employees, agents or contractors;
- (2) claims for libel, slander, or infringement of copyright arising from the material transmitted over the Indemnified Party's facilities arising from the Indemnifying Party's own communications or the communications of such Indemnifying Party's customers; and

- (3) claims for infringement of patents arising from combining the Indemnified Party's facilities or services with, or the using of the Indemnified Party's services or facilities in connection with, facilities of the Indemnifying Party.

Notwithstanding this indemnification provision or any other provision in this Agreement, neither Party, nor its parent, partners, subsidiaries, affiliates, agents, servants, or employees, shall be liable to the other for Consequential Damages (as defined in §12.3).

- 11.2 The Indemnified Party will notify the Indemnifying Party promptly in writing of any claims, lawsuits, or demands by customers or other third parties for which the Indemnified Party alleges that the Indemnifying Party is responsible under this Section, and, if requested by the Indemnifying Party, will tender the defense of such claim, lawsuit or demand.

- (1) In the event the Indemnifying Party does not promptly assume or diligently pursue the defense of the tendered action, then the Indemnified Party may proceed to defend or settle said action and the Indemnifying Party shall hold harmless the Indemnified Party from any loss, cost liability, damage and expense.
- (2) In the event the Party otherwise entitled to indemnification from the other elects to decline such indemnification, then the Party making such an election may, at its own expense, assume defense and settlement of the claim, lawsuit or demand.
- (3) The Parties will cooperate in every reasonable manner with the defense or settlement of any claim, demand, or lawsuit.

## **12.0 LIMITATION OF LIABILITY**

- 12.1 No liability shall attach to either Party, its parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, agents, servants, employees, officers, directors, or partners for damages arising from errors, mistakes, omissions, interruptions, or delays in the course of establishing, furnishing, rearranging, moving, terminating, changing, or providing or failing to provide services or facilities (including the obtaining or furnishing of information with respect thereof or with respect to users of the services or facilities) in the absence of gross negligence or willful misconduct.
- 12.2 Except as otherwise provided in §11.0, no Party shall be liable to the other Party for any loss, defect or equipment failure caused by the conduct of the first Party, its agents, servants, contractors or others acting in aid or



concert with that Party, except in the case of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

- 12.3 In no event shall either Party have any liability whatsoever to the other Party for any indirect, special, consequential, incidental or punitive damages, including but not limited to loss of anticipated profits or revenue or other economic loss in connection with or arising from anything said, omitted or done hereunder (collectively, "Consequential Damages"), even if the other Party has been advised of the possibility of such damages.

### **13.0 DISCLAIMER**

**EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED HEREIN, NEITHER PARTY MAKES ANY REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANY WARRANTY AS TO MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR INTENDED OR PARTICULAR PURPOSE WITH RESPECT TO SERVICES PROVIDED HEREUNDER. ADDITIONALLY, NEITHER PARTY ASSUMES ANY RESPONSIBILITY WITH REGARD TO THE CORRECTNESS OF DATA OR INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE OTHER PARTY WHEN THIS DATA OR INFORMATION IS ACCESSED AND USED BY A THIRD-PARTY.**

### **14.0 REGULATORY APPROVAL**

The Parties understand and agree that this Agreement will be filed with the Commission, and to the extent required by FCC rules may thereafter be filed with the FCC. Each Party covenants and agrees to fully support approval of this Agreement by the Commission or the FCC under §252(e) of the Act without modification. The Parties, however, reserve the right to seek regulatory relief and otherwise seek redress from each other regarding performance and implementation of this Agreement. In the event the Commission or FCC rejects this Agreement in whole or in part, the Parties agree to meet and negotiate in good faith to arrive at a mutually acceptable modification of the rejected portion(s). Further, this Agreement is subject to change, modification, or cancellation as may be required by a regulatory authority or court in the exercise of its lawful jurisdiction.

The Parties agree that their entrance into this Agreement is without prejudice to any positions they may have taken previously, or may take in future, in any legislative, regulatory, judicial or other public forum addressing any matters, including matters related to the same types of arrangements covered in this Agreement.

**15.0 CHANGE IN LAW**

The Parties acknowledge that the respective rights and obligations of each Party as set forth in this Agreement are based on the text of the Act and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder by the FCC and the Commission as of the Effective Date ("Applicable Rules"). In the event of any amendment to the Act, any effective legislative action or any effective regulatory or judicial order, rule, regulation, arbitration award, dispute resolution procedures under this Agreement or other legal action purporting to apply the provisions of the Act to the Parties or in which the FCC or the Commission makes a generic determination that is generally applicable which revises, modifies or reverses the Applicable Rules (individually and collectively, Amended Rules), either Party may, by providing written notice to the other party, require that the affected provisions of this Agreement be renegotiated in good faith and this Agreement shall be amended accordingly to reflect the pricing, terms and conditions of each such Amended Rules relating to any of the provisions in this Agreement.

**16.0 MOST FAVORED NATION PROVISION**

In accordance with §252(i) of the Act and 47 C.F.R. §51.809, VZW shall be entitled to adopt from Sandhill any entire Interconnection/Compensation agreement provided by Sandhill to any other CMRS provider that has been filed and approved by the Commission, for services described in such agreement, on the same terms and conditions. The term of the adopted agreement shall expire on the same date as set forth in the agreement that was adopted.

**17.0 DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Except as provided under §252 of the Act with respect to the approval of this Agreement by the Commission, the Parties desire to resolve disputes arising out of or relating to this Agreement without, to the extent possible, litigation. Accordingly, except for action seeking a temporary restraining order or an injunction related to the purposes of this Agreement, or suit to compel compliance with this dispute resolution process, the Parties agree to use the following dispute resolution procedures with respect to any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement or its breach.

**17.1 Informal Resolution of Disputes:**

At the written request of a Party, each Party will, within thirty (30) days of such request, appoint a knowledgeable, responsible representative, empowered to resolve such dispute, to meet and negotiate in good faith to resolve any dispute arising out of or relating to this Agreement. The Parties intend that non-lawyer, business representatives conduct these negotiations. The location, format, frequency, duration, and conclusion of these discussions shall be left to the discretion of the representatives. Upon agreement, the representatives may utilize other alternative dispute

resolution procedures such as mediation to assist in the negotiations. Discussions and correspondence among the representatives for purposes of these negotiations shall be treated as Confidential Information developed for purposes of settlement, exempt from discovery, and shall not be admissible in the arbitration described below or in any lawsuit without the concurrence of all Parties. Documents identified in or provided with such communications, which are not prepared for purposes of the negotiations, are not so exempted and may, if otherwise discoverable, be discovered or otherwise admissible, be admitted in evidence, in the arbitration or lawsuit.

**17.2 Formal Dispute Resolution:**

If negotiations fail to produce an agreeable resolution within ninety (90) days, then either Party may proceed with any remedy available to it pursuant to law, equity or agency mechanisms; provided, that upon mutual agreement of the Parties such disputes may also be submitted to binding arbitration. In the case of an arbitration, each Party shall bear its own costs. The Parties shall equally split the fees of any mutually agreed upon arbitration procedure and the associated arbitrator.

**17.3 Continuous Service:**

The Parties shall continue providing services to each other during the pendency of any dispute resolution procedure, and the Parties shall continue to perform their payment obligations including making payments in accordance with this Agreement.

**18.0 MISCELLANEOUS**

**18.1 Authorization:**

18.1.1 Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc. is a corporation duly organized, validly existing and in good standing under the laws of the State of South Carolina and has full power and authority to execute and deliver this Agreement and to perform its obligations hereunder, subject to any necessary regulatory approval.

18.1.2 The Verizon Wireless entities listed on the signature page of this Agreement are duly organized, validly existing and in good standing under the laws of the respective states in which they are organized. Each has full power and authority to execute and deliver this Agreement and to perform its obligations hereunder, subject to any necessary regulatory approval.

18.2 Compliance:

Each Party shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations applicable to its performance under this Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as requiring or permitting either Party to contravene any mandatory requirement of federal or state law, or any regulations or orders adopted pursuant to such law.

18.3 Independent Contractors:

Neither this Agreement, nor any actions taken by VZW or Sandhill in compliance with this Agreement, shall be deemed to create an agency or joint venture relationship between VZW and Sandhill, or any relationship other than that of co-carriers. Neither this Agreement, nor any actions taken by VZW or Sandhill in compliance with this Agreement, shall create a contractual, agency, or any other type of relationship or third party liability between VZW and Sandhill end users or others.

18.4 Force Majeure:

Neither Party shall be liable for any delay or failure in performance of any part of this Agreement from any cause beyond its control and without its fault or negligence including, without limitation, acts of nature, acts of civil or military authority, government regulations, embargoes, epidemics, terrorist acts, riots, insurrections, fires, explosions, earthquakes, nuclear accidents, floods, work stoppages, equipment failure, power blackouts, volcanic action, other major environmental disturbances, unusually severe weather conditions or any other circumstances beyond the reasonable control and without fault or negligence of the Party affected. (collectively, a "Force Majeure Event"). If any Force Majeure Event occurs, the Party delayed or unable to perform shall give immediate notice to the other Party and shall take all reasonable steps to correct the Force Majeure Event. During the pendency of the Force Majeure Event, the duties of the Parties under this Agreement affected by the Force Majeure Event shall be abated and shall resume without liability thereafter.

18.5 Confidentiality:

18.5.1 Any information such as specifications, drawings, sketches, business information, forecasts, models, samples, data, computer programs and other software and documentation of one Party (a "Disclosing Party") that is furnished or made available or otherwise disclosed to the other Party or any of its employees, contractors, or agents (its "Representatives" and with a Party, a "Receiving Party") pursuant to this Agreement ("Proprietary Information") shall be deemed the property of the Disclosing

Party. Proprietary Information, if written, shall be clearly and conspicuously marked "Confidential" or "Proprietary" or other similar notice, and, if oral or visual, shall be confirmed in writing as confidential by the Disclosing Party to the Receiving Party within ten (10) days after disclosure. Unless Proprietary Information was previously known by the Receiving Party free of any obligation to keep it confidential, or has been or is subsequently made public by an act not attributable to the Receiving Party, or is explicitly agreed in writing not to be regarded as confidential, such information: (i) shall be held in confidence by each Receiving Party; (ii) shall be disclosed to only those persons who have a need for it in connection with the provision of services required to fulfill this Agreement and shall be used by those persons only for such purposes; and (iii) may be used for other purposes only upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed to in advance of such use in writing by the Parties. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, a Receiving Party shall be entitled to disclose or provide Proprietary Information as required by any governmental authority or applicable law, upon advice of counsel, only in accordance with §18.5.2 of this Agreement.

18.5.2 If any Receiving Party is required by any governmental authority or by applicable law to disclose any Proprietary Information, then such Receiving Party shall provide the Disclosing Party with written notice of such requirement as soon as possible and prior to such disclosure. The Disclosing Party may then seek appropriate protective relief from all or part of such requirement. The Receiving Party shall use all commercially reasonable efforts to cooperate with the Disclosing Party in attempting to obtain any protective relief, which such Disclosing Party chooses to obtain.

18.5.3 In the event of the expiration or termination of this Agreement for any reason whatsoever, each Party shall return to the other Party or destroy all Proprietary Information and other documents, work papers and other material (including all copies thereof) obtained from the other Party in connection with this Agreement and shall use all reasonable efforts, including instructing its employees and others who have had access to such information, to keep confidential and not to use any such information, unless such information is now, or is hereafter disclosed, through no act, omission or fault of such Party, in any manner making it available to the general public.

18.6 Governing Law:

This Agreement shall be governed by Federal law, where applicable, and otherwise by the domestic laws of the State of South Carolina without reference to conflict of law provisions. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Parties may seek resolution of disputes under this Agreement by the FCC, the Commission, or the South Carolina state court, or federal court, as appropriate.

18.7 Taxes:

Each Party purchasing services hereunder shall pay or otherwise be responsible for all federal, state, or local sales, use, excise, gross receipts, transaction or similar taxes, fees or surcharges levied against or upon such purchasing Party (or the providing Party when such providing Party is permitted to pass along to the purchasing Party such taxes, fees or surcharges), except for any tax on either Party's corporate existence, status or income. Whenever possible, these amounts shall be billed as a separate item on the invoice. To the extent a sale is claimed to be for resale tax exemption, the purchasing Party shall furnish the providing Party a proper resale tax exemption certificate as authorized or required by statute or regulation by the jurisdiction providing said resale tax exemption. Failure to timely provide such sale for resale tax exemption certificate will result in no exemption being available to the purchasing Party.

18.8 Assignment:

This Agreement shall be binding upon the Parties and shall continue to be binding upon all such entities regardless of any subsequent change in their ownership. Except as provided in this paragraph, neither Party may assign or transfer (whether by operation of law or otherwise) this Agreement (or any rights or obligations hereunder) to a non-affiliated party without the prior written consent of the other Party which consent will not be unreasonably withheld; provided that either Party may assign this Agreement to a corporate Affiliate or an entity under its common control or an entity acquiring all or substantially all of its assets or equity by providing prior written notice to the other Party of such assignment or transfer. Any attempted assignment or transfer that is not permitted is void *ab initio*. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, this Agreement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the Parties' respective successors and assigns.

18.9 Non-Waiver:

Failure of either Party to insist on performance of any term or condition of this Agreement or to exercise any right or privilege hereunder shall not be

construed as a continuing or future waiver of such term, condition, right or privilege.

18.10 Notices:

Notices given by one Party to the other Party under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be: (i) delivered personally; (ii) delivered by overnight express delivery service; or (iii) mailed, certified mail, return receipt requested to the following addresses of the Parties:

| <b>To: VZW</b>   | <b>To: Sandhill</b>   |
|--|---|
| Verizon Wireless<br>1120 Sanctuary Parkway<br>Suite 150<br>Alpharetta, GA 30009<br>Tel: 770-797-1263<br><br>Attn: Manager –Interconnection       | Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc.<br>122 S. Main St.<br>P.O. Box 519<br>Jefferson, SC 29718<br>Tel: 803-658-3434<br><br>Attn: Raymond Fisher |
| With a copy to:<br><br>Verizon Wireless<br>1300 I Street, NW, Suite 400<br>Washington, DC 20005<br><br>Attn: Regulatory Counsel, Interconnection |   |

or to such other address as either Party shall designate by proper notice. Notices will be deemed given as of the earlier of: (i) the date of actual receipt; (ii) the next business day when notice is sent *via* overnight express mail or personal delivery; or (iii) three (3) days after mailing in the case of certified U.S. Mail.

18.11 Publicity and Use of Trademarks or Service Marks:

Neither Party nor its subcontractors or agents shall use the other Party's trademarks, service marks, logos or other proprietary trade dress in any advertising, press releases, publicity matters or other promotional materials without such Party's prior written consent.

18.12 Joint Work Product:

This Agreement is the joint work product of the Parties and has been negotiated by the Parties and their respective counsel and shall be fairly interpreted in accordance with its terms. In the event of any ambiguities, no inferences shall be drawn against either Party.

18.13 No Third Party Beneficiaries; Disclaimer of Agency:

This Agreement is for the sole benefit of the Parties and their permitted assigns, and nothing herein expressed or implied shall create or be construed to create any third-party beneficiary rights hereunder. Except for provisions herein expressly authorizing a Party to act for another, nothing in this Agreement shall constitute a party as a legal representative or agent of the other Party; nor shall a Party have the right or authority to assume, create or incur any liability or any obligation of any kind, express or implied, against, in the name of, or on behalf of the other Party, unless otherwise expressly permitted by such other Party. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Agreement, no Party undertakes to perform any obligation of the other Party, whether regulatory or contractual, or to assume any responsibility for the management of the other Party's business.

18.14 No License:

No license under patents, copyrights, or any other intellectual property right (other than the limited license to use consistent with the terms, conditions and restrictions of this Agreement) is granted by either Party, or shall be implied or arise by estoppel with respect to any transactions contemplated under this Agreement.

18.15 Technology Upgrades:

Nothing in this Agreement shall limit either Party's ability to upgrade its network through the incorporation of new equipment, new software or otherwise, provided it is to industry standards, and that the Party initiating the upgrade shall provide the other Party written notice at least ninety (90) days prior to the incorporation of any such upgrade in its network which will materially impact the other Party's service. Each Party shall be solely responsible for the cost and effort of accommodating such changes in its own network.

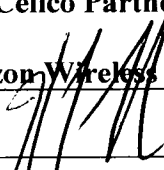
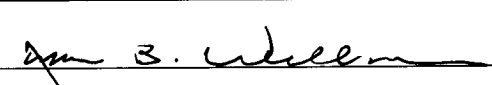
18.16 Entire Agreement:

The terms contained in this Agreement and any Schedules, Exhibits, tariffs and other documents or instruments referred to herein are hereby incorporated into this Agreement by reference as if set forth fully herein, and constitute the entire agreement between the Parties with respect to the subject matter hereof, superseding all prior understandings, proposals and other communications, oral or written. Neither Party shall be bound by any preprinted terms additional to or different from those in this Agreement that may appear subsequently in the other Party's form documents, purchase orders, quotations, acknowledgments, invoices or



other communications. This Agreement may only be modified by writing signed by an officer of each Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as of the dates listed below.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Anderson CellTelCo d/b/a Verizon Wireless</b><br><b>By: Cellco Partnership, Its General Partner</b><br><br><b>Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless</b><br><br><b>Fayetteville Cellular Telephone Company Limited Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless</b><br><b>By: Cellco Partnership, Its General Partner</b><br><br><b>Verizon Wireless of the East LP d/b/a Verizon Wireless</b><br><b>By: Verizon Wireless of Georgia, LLC, Its General Partner</b><br><b>By: Cellco Partnership, Its Sole Member</b><br><b>Verizon Wireless Telecom Inc.</b> | <b>Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, Inc.</b>  |
| By:   | By:  |
| Name: Hans Leutenegger   | Name: Irvin B. Williams  |
| Title: Area Vice President, Network  | Title: General Manager   |
| Date: 3/11/2010  | Date: 2/25/2010  |

**Attachment A**

Reserved for Future Use